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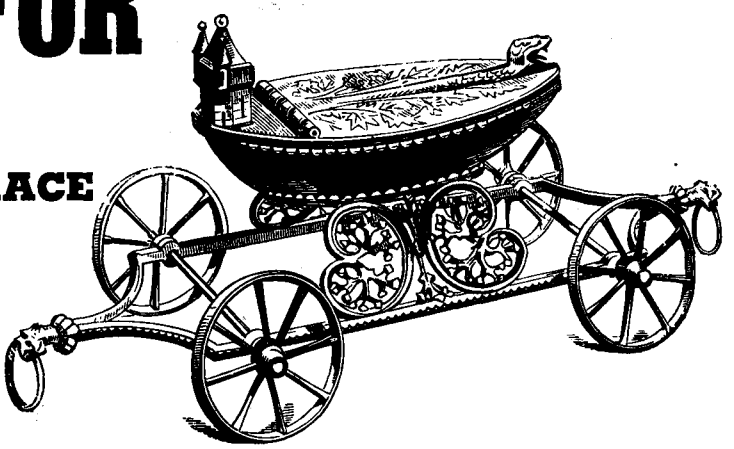
NEGOTIATING FOR PEACE

SALT AND THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

RAMSDELL GURNEY, JR.



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REVIEWS:
ANNE FREMANTLE on MARGARET MEAD and BEVERLEY NICHOLS **MICHAEL TRUE** on AMERICAN CATHOLIC LITERATURE **ARTHUR A. COHEN** on JAMES SCULLY

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NEWS & VIEWS

Voice from the Past

Father Charles Coughlin appears to be taking on new life at 81—not the sort of life that made him so controversial as the radio-priest of the 1930s, but a life beyond the obscurity that was his for 30 years.

The new Father Coughlin is suddenly available to newsmen and willing to discourse of past or present.

Of the past he talked recently with contributing editor Robert S. Gallagher of *American Heritage*, and specifically of his silencing by Detroit's Archbishop Edward Mooney.

"Well, he became archbishop after Michael Gallagher died," Coughlin reminisced, "and one day he had me downtown to discuss something with me, 'twasn't very pleasant. I said, 'Bishop, let's get this thing straight. You are here to be the hatchetman for Pius XII, and I want you to do the job, because I stand back of him, if he told me to jump off this window. Don't be afraid. I hold no animosity toward you. You're doing your job, and I stand back of authority.' There were tears in [Mooney's] eyes. He didn't have much courage, he didn't have much fortitude, but he was a gentleman."

Of the present, Coughlin talked with Hiley H. Ward, religion writer of the *Detroit Free Press* in his Birmingham, Mich., home of retirement and in a Bloomfield Hills restaurant—an interview which reveals that the new Coughlin is still very much the old Coughlin.

"He stands up," Ward reports, "for what he calls 'disgusted Catholics, whose prelates are more interested in destroying the values of residential properties with their brash endorsement of cross-district school busing than they are in protecting the faith of their old-time parishioners . . .

"Satan is using the racial syndrome to drive white Catholics from the church because churchmen have gone overboard in their presentation of 'Love your brother as yourself,' and 'Whatsoever you do to the least of my little ones, you do unto me.'

"These Christly mandates of 'love' have been tortured as has the norm of 'Let your conscience be your guide.'"

Turning to politics, Ward records Coughlin as regarding Presidential aide Henry Kissinger as a lackey of the Council on Foreign Relations. Said Coughlin:

"Henry Kissinger is an appointee who owes his allegiance first to Governor Rockefeller, a major controller of the CFR, and then, if any, to Mr. Nixon . . .

"The American people are not supposed to know too much about this. They are happy politically as long as they are entertained by buffoons seeking a Presidential nomination."

Incidentally, a new book on Coughlin is coming in January from Little Brown: Sheldon Marcus' *Father Coughlin: The Tumultuous Life of the Priest of the Little Flower.*

Voice of the Present

Toward a Classless Society Department. . . . Mrs. John L. Loeb, commissioner of the New York City Commission for the United Nations and for the Consular Corps, talking in the *New York Times* about the denial of a luxury duplex apartment at 1 Sutton Place South to the chief Dutch representative at the UN:

"This is the eighth case of a United Nations ambassador being unable to buy or rent in this city . . . The men of substance who own and head these boards must realize that they have an obligation to the international community and the UN. When they turn down a chief representative from *an affluent Western nation* (emphasis added), it creates animosity and defensiveness against the United States and its delegation at the United Nations."

(It used to be because of race, creed or color, but the reluctance to rent to diplomats in New York obviously has taken on the new factor of economics. As one owner phrased it: "Diplomats entertain a lot and that puts a tremendous strain on our staff, and with inflation and taxes, we just can't have it.")

W&J Sloane Catholicism

Feeling that the times have outmoded traditional confessional boxes, a Fulton, N.Y., church has gone to a "room of reconciliation" in the belief that it offers a better atmosphere for renewing the sacrament of confession.

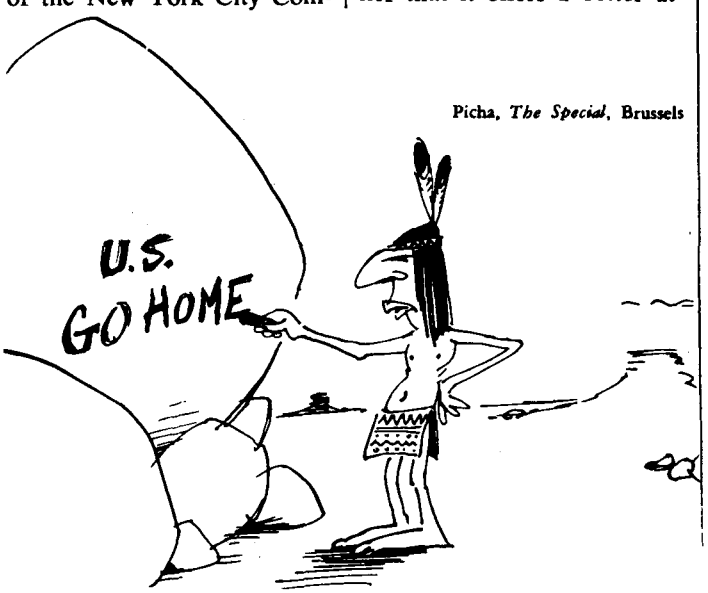
Focal point of the "room" is "a rich 6 x 9 oriental rug," on which are set a small table and two comfortable chairs. Priest and penitent sit across from one another and proceed through their respective business. For the squeamish, old-fashioned penitent, there's a screen at one end of the "room."

All this takes place at Holy Family Church, Syracuse diocese, under Father Joseph M. Champlin, pastor. Champlin discusses his project in the current *St. Anthony's Messenger*, and there it attracted the startled attention of the *Washingon Post.*

The *Post* seemed particularly taken with problems connected with soundproofing the "room of reconciliation" so those in the reception room could not overhear the confessions.

A tape recorder playing "appropriate mood music" was activated, but, notes the *Post*, the machine caused some to wonder whether their confessions might be being taped.

The solution: an FM radio in the vestibule tuned to "uninterrupted and suitable music just loud enough to cover voices."



Picha, *The Special*, Brussels

Odds and Ends

—The Army may have its General Goodpaster, but the Marines have their Colonel Macho. He's commander of Marine Air Group 12, the last of the flying Leathernecks in Vietnam. Joseph Heller wouldn't have dared fabricate that.

—Finally, *Baltimore Sun* correspondent Daniel Berger on the challenge of finding the person to lead Northern Ireland out of its chaos: "It would take an election to validate anyone's claim to public support. But it is hard to say what [the election] should be for, who would deign to run, who would boycott, who would vote, and whether it could be safely held at all."

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Women and Rome

Heidelberg

To the Editors: Subject: "Doing in Women" [Oct. 6]: As to the first half of your editorial, you have, it seems to me, hit the nail on the head. As to the second half, I am doubtful about the optimism of the article. Rather I am thinking (apprehending) that this Motu Proprio, especially with the extenuating comments of the Curia, has increased Rome's reputation of equivocalness, ambiguity and duplicity.

As to the recent election, I am condoling, but notwithstanding also hoping with you. (REV.) ALFONS BEIL

Jaded America

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: Your editorial on the jading of America [Oct. 27] struck an emotionally responsive chord. The picture painted by you and *Time*'s essay of Oct. 16 is somber indeed. Perhaps what has become more frightening than the purported pecadillos of politicians is the lack of collective moral outrage on the part of the American people in response to these political crimes.

You ask: How does one snap the country out of its resignation to the status quo? Conveying a sense of urgency by election time is not the answer. Perhaps the answer lies deep in America's collective consciousness which is experienced as impotence in the face of power. The price paid for a long history of the myth of rugged individualism is this feeling of powerlessness. We have individualized ourselves into isolation and have consequently become impotent and manipulable. No doubt, the complexity of life in the postwar years together with the rigidly competitive spirit that is so characteristic of the U.S. has served to further separate individuals from that mutual support that is so necessary for the creative growth. Life in the big cities and suburbia bears strong witness to this.

The point I'm making is that what

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THE BORMANN BOOM

Martin Bormann, "Found" again. Twenty-seven years after his first disappearance the image of this mysterious and brutal man is still powerful enough to capture the public imagination for a week's worth of headlines and shove the publishing industry into a mini-boom of Bormann books—there will be at least three next season. By now there are two Martin Bormanns. One is the historical Bormann, Hitler's private secretary, whom William S. Shirer described as a "molelike man" who had once served a year in prison for complicity in a political murder, burrowing in the dark recesses of party life, furthering his intrigues. Cut off from Hitler, Alan Bullock wrote, Bormann was a political cipher; but, functioning as his lackey—deciding whom the Fuehrer should see and what he should read, taking advantage of the most favorable moments to influence critical decisions by casual remarks—he was one of the most powerful men in the world.

The other Bormann is the figure of perverted romance—The Fugitive, the unseen international malevolent force, crossing boundaries, sipping wine in dark corners of village cafes, changing his name—Ricardo Bauer, Juan Gomez, Jose Perez, Eliezer Goldstein, and Augustin Van der Lange Lerrbach—surfacing from time to time like the Loch Ness monster or Howard Hughes, not long enough to be really recognized but just long enough to make sure we still care. Thus, according to a number of reports, Bormann: died in Hitler's bunker in 1945; died in Russia, a retired Soviet spy, two years ago; fled to Argentina in a Spanish submarine in 1946; sailed tourist class on the *Giovanni C* from Genoa in 1948 disguised as a Jesuit; functioned as a lay member of the Redemptorist order in Bolivia for over a year; has been running a Nazi-mafia business operation in South America off and on for over twenty years.

Of course this fantasy image has its uses. It returns us to that simpler age when America was clearly right and its enemies clearly wrong. World War II is the best example we have of a war fought to save Civilization from the schemes of evil men. As long as one of those evil men is still at large we can renew our now-tarnished righteousness through his pursuit. Yet, the publication of a series of articles by Ladislas Farago and Stewart Steven in the *New York Daily News* (November 25-December 2) and the

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London Express, claiming that Bormann escaped to Latin America with the help of the Vatican and Juan Peron, raises a number of questions.

One concerns truth. The authors claimed that they have risked their lives, infiltrated files, unraveled a "maze of intrigue and collusion, some in high places"—indicating that they have left no cliché unturned in their quest. Yet, the authors have never seen Bormann. The pieces, particularly the first by Steven, are written in the "gee-whiz" style of the old Hearstian sensationalism. They resemble Henry Morton Stanley's breathless November 3, 1871, dispatch from Central Africa to the *New York Herald* that Dr. David Livingstone had been found—except that Livingstone was sitting beside Stanley as he wrote! The stories do not identify the sources of the photographs purporting to show Bormann at the Chilean border last October 5. (Responding to our question the *News* said only that Farago had obtained the photos from Argentine Intelligence.) Furthermore, after the *News* promised that Farago would reveal "how the elusive Bormann can be captured" Farago's final story was no more than a complaint that authorities were not interested in bringing the Nazi to justice. Meanwhile, Simon Wiesenthal, who tracked down Adolf Eichmann, claims that Farago has been duped, and Argentine and Vatican officials who have been embarrassed by his stories have contradicted some important details. Nor is our confidence increased by the CBS report that Farago the researcher does not speak Spanish.

The fact is that the *News* and Simon and Schuster, who have contracted to publish Farago's yet-unfinished book for a "low six-figure" advance, are taking a chance. Neither the *News* nor the publishers have been able to double-check Farago's sources. The material was rushed into print now because the authors were afraid of being scooped by another British paper. It seems to us that respect for the press is already weak enough and the reputation of the publishing industry already sufficiently shaken by the Hughes-Irving and Chief Red Fox affairs to suggest caution on the resurrection of Martin Bormann rather than the "Bormann Found Mistress in Bordello" headlines the *News* has given it.

If Farago's evidence is authentic, other, ultimately more serious, questions remain. One is how Bormann, notorious for his hatred of religion, and other Nazi criminals in Farago's account received so much help from the church. But, more important, is much to be gained by pursuing this already-condemned, wretched man? No doubt for the sake of the historical record he should be arrested and allowed to tell his story. But we have not learned enough from stories of his co-conspiriators who stood before the judgment of Nuremberg to save us from the Calleys, our automated air wars, our own scorched earth policy in Vietnam. Perhaps we don't really want to find Martin Bormann. We may recognize in him a little something of ourselves.

PHILIP BERRIGAN

The announcement that Father Berrigan is to be paroled before Christmas from federal prison, where he has been serving a combination of sentences for anti-war activities, is happy news—but happiness mitigated by the fact that Philip Berrigan's prison sentences were out of all proportion to the "crimes" committed, beginning with that six-year term for pouring blood on some government paper in Baltimore. The parole thus will correct the bureaucratic injustice of keeping a person incarcerated beyond his fair due, but it will not of itself correct the human injustice done the individual. Accordingly, while there is joy in Father Berrigan's release, one's gratitude for the gesture is necessarily restrained.

Father Berrigan will exit from prison with the war in a considerably different state from when he was first placed behind bars in 1968. The fighting is winding down, and a peace pact of sorts might be signed even before this editorial is read. Some may argue that Philip Berrigan and the resistance movement he almost personally launched cannot claim any credit for this turn of events. But this much is certain: Philip Berrigan helped coalesce public opinion against the war, and public opinion was instrumental in forcing the national leadership to seek a peace. This is a detail of history which puts us all in the debt of Father Philip Berrigan.

Under a work-plan submitted to the Parole Board, Philip Berrigan will return to the Josephite Fathers in Baltimore, where he will develop programs for the Josephite apostolate among minority communities. It is also reported that he will help recruit younger men to the order. These are worthy activities. But it is still to be hoped that, within the terms of his parole, Father Philip Berrigan will continue to be the hairshirt to government and the prod to people that he was during the 1960s on all in the public realm that cries out for correction. His witness is needed now as much as ever.

COMING

DOROTHEE SÖLLE writes about political theology and the liberation of mankind:

"Theology cannot afford to say out of hand to a man: 'God loves you.' Since every fact of reality is substantial, established by social processes, such a sentence has to be actualized politically. It will only have meaning if it initiates the movement of change in the status quo. Imagine that this sentence is said to a person who has lived fifteen years in our urban slums. The hatred he has experienced renders such a sentence unbelievable to him. It gives him no reason to trust in God."

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THE PARTY IN QUESTION

MICHAEL NOVAK

What Frank Mankiewicz and other McGovernites at one time liked to say about the Democratic Party regulars and labor union leaders—"They can't deliver"—may now be said of the leaders of the New Politics.

The Democratic Party is divided into three parts: the Southern Democrats, the urban ethnic regulars (including ordinary blacks), and an unstable coalition of the new educated class and activist blacks.

There were in 1972 over 62 million registered Democrats. While Democratic candidates on almost every other level were winning a remarkable number of elections, George McGovern received just over 28 million votes. Over half the registered Democrats refused to vote for him or his movement. It was the sharpest electoral setback a Democrat has received in 50 years—a more thorough rejection would be hard to imagine.

A choice awaits Democrats in national politics. Do we want to win back the Presidency? Or do we want to divide into three separate parties?

There would be room, for example, for a New Christian Democratic Party, or Center Party, uniting urban workers around the values of home, neighborhood and economic reform. Insurance and housing scandals, and the elementary lack of safety of life, limb and property in urban environments are issues that could be given progressive focus—and serve to unite millions around common sense, real-to-life issues, free from the cant of Right and Left.

A new Center Party could, I think, sweep the nation, replacing both the Republican and the Democratic Parties as we have known them, and isolating the McGovernites and the Goldwaterites at either "extreme." Even Ted Kennedy and Ted Agnew might find themselves squeezed out by such a party. Both men arouse passions too intense to be less than vulnerable.

The Left wing of the Democratic Party has much to contribute to the health of the nation—if only it can break its own code words, become self-critical, shed its righteousness. One expects more of the Left wing. One expects an ability to see the world from the other fellow's point of view—a greater outreach, a more adroit unmasking of the Left's own self-interests.

What *are* the interests of the Left? Power. Change. Jobs. Status. All in the name of humanism, of course. All for morality's sake. Moral complacence is to the Right.

Despite its faults, the Left is one of our two best hopes for decent political progress. Hence, the present bankruptcy of the Left is alarming. Can anyone recall a time when the articulate spokesmen of the Left were so far out of touch with their natural constituency?

Anthony Lewis ended his post-election reflection in the *Times* in utter confusion: "But liberals have to realize that they lost this election —and understand that others have fundamentally different perceptions. They might remember the words of Gertrude Stein on her deathbed. She murmured, 'What is the answer?' There was silence and she said: 'In that case, what is the question.'" These are staggering sentences.

Of all the factors in the Presidential race in 1972, Lewis is certain, "Undoubtedly the most important was race." He cites the opinion of his colleague Jack Rosenthal: "People's views on welfare, education, crime and other issues . . . really add up to race."

Such a perception of America is divisive, destructive and morally arrogant. It embodies the fundamental mistake of 1972. George McGovern lost precisely because so many on the Left think as Lewis and Rosenthal do. *They* call Agnew divisive; then they interpret every domestic issue as an issue of white racism.

Many Americans know differently. They believe that the *Left* is racist—by condescension, by lies, by illusions, by inequities and unrealities. The Left treats blacks like injured, broken, oppressed people, unable to make it on their own, unable to bear the truth, requiring excuses and explanations.

On the one hand, one black woman tells Robert Coles, blacks are viewed as beaten down and without spiritual strength and joy, and a thousand-year fortitude and character of their own. On the other hand, they are viewed as innocent, and without pathologies and capacities for evil on their own. In other words, as less than free persons, responsible for themselves and to themselves.

Ordinary white Americans who live near blacks, or work with them, are often more straightforward in attitude and speech, accepting and being accepted for what they are—harsher, rougher, but more egalitarian in their standards of judgment. They are not cursed with the self-consciousness that makes the educated worry more about uprooting the inherited racism from their own consciousness, than about accepting the good and the bad in everybody.

Anglo-American society was from the beginning racist in its attitudes and institutions regarding blacks, Indians and other dark-skinned ethnic groups. That is our inheritance. Overcoming it is not easy, nor is it a matter of instant will or swift enlightenment. Those on the Left are scarcely aware of the unconscious racism of which they themselves are still carriers. So why are they so harsh with

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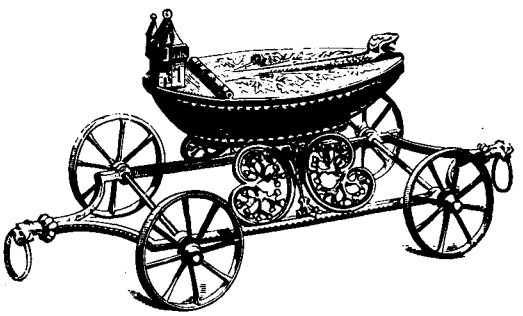
NEGOTIATING FOR PEACE

RAMSDELL GURNEY, JR.



SALT and the nuclear arms race, 1962-1972

Disarmament has had a discouraging history. The first international disarmament conference was called by Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and held in the Hague in 1899. Its results were negligible. During the present century, few years have passed without negotiations for some variety of arms reduction or control. Yet today, in 1972, an arms race spirals on with ever increasing stakes and risks. One expert has spoken ominously of a "race to oblivion."

The Second World War opened a new era in weapons technology and, consequently, an increased urgency for disarment. On August 6, 1945, the United States introduced mankind to nuclear warfare by dropping an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Three days later a second bomb was deposited on Nagasaki. On September 5, the first Allied reporter to visit Hiroshima after the Japanese surrender recorded these memorable impressions:

> Thirty days after the first atomic bomb destroyed the city and shook the world, people are still dying, mysteriously and horribly—people who were uninjured in the cataclysm—from an unknown something which I can only describe as the atomic plague.
>
> Hiroshima does not look like a bombed city. . . . I write these facts as dispassionately as I can, in the hope that they will act as a warning to the world. In the first testing ground of the atomic bomb . . . it gives you an empty feeling in the stomach to see such man-made devastation. . . .

The terrifying specter of nuclear holocaust and human annihilation suddenly hovered over the world. People everywhere were confused and apprehensive. Victory over the Axis powers had been achieved, and for that most nations were thankful. But war and technology had joined hands in an unforeseen dimension. Seemingly, the time was ripe—psychologically, militantly and politically—for governments to move toward disarmament.

Logically, nations looked for solutions first to the United States, which had the atomic monopoly, and then to the Soviet Union, which because of its potential power and influence, would have to participate if an arrangement were to be meaningful. But neither disarmament nor arms control was forthcoming.

The United States from the start espoused nuclear controls and disarmament but proposed them in self-serving terms. Washington took the position that if controls of atomic energy were to exist, they would have to be exercised through an international agency, itself dominated by American personnel and bound by American regulations. These proposals, known as the Baruch plan and presented in June 1946, further stipulated that upon establishment of acceptable international controls, destruction of American nuclear weapons (disarmament) would come only after a long chain of prior developments, with no time limit specified. In other words, Washington was asking the Soviet Union and other nations to trust the United States with sole possession of the atomic bomb for an indefinite period. This was hardly realistic and guaranteed Moscow's quick rejection.

The Soviet counterproposal, the Gromyko plan, was equally unrealistic. It called for prohibition of production or use of nuclear weapons and elimination of existing stockpiles within three months. Controls would be

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implemented thereafter. This was tantamount to suggesting that the United States destroy its nuclear arsenal without explicit and safe guarantees. Washington, of course, refused to take the plan seriously.

Thus a seemingly unique chance for disarmament in the immediate postwar years was lost. Both Washington and Moscow obstinately clung to the fundamentals of their initial proposals until the early 1950s. The result was a new surge in the arms race, with the United States hoping to lengthen its lead in nuclear weaponry and the Soviet Union striving to catch up.

It was nearly a decade before another favorable opportunity for disarmament arose. In May 1955, without any advance warning, Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the London session of the special U.N. Sub-committee on Disarmament, announced that his government would accept a modified Anglo-French disarmament program, first proposed in 1954 and backed by the United States and Canada. This program had provided for a ban on the use of nuclear weapons with the start of negotiations, and the gradual elimination of stockpiles tied to reductions of conventional forces. A strict control system was included.

The specific Soviet draft paralleled the Western plan in all major respects. Moreover, Moscow tacked on an additional control provision of its own: the establishment of "control posts"at large airfields, ports and railway junctions, and on main highways, to guard against the danger of surprise attack. Malik then went on to explain that the "Soviet proposal reflects all the most important . . . wishes of the Western Powers," and exhorted them to act without delay.

The hopes aroused by this Soviet *démarche* were soon dashed. The United States quickly called for a recess, and when negotiations were resumed over two months later, Harold Stassen, the American representative, gave the following startling announcement:

> The United States does now place a reservation upon all of its pre-Geneva substantive positions taken in the sub-committee or in the Disarmament Commission or in the UN on these questions in relationship to levels of armament.

Hence, with one sweeping stroke, Washington had withdrawn all of its previous and vigorously urged proposals associated with the Anglo-French plan. The reservation announced by Stassen remained until 1961.

The American government never offered a satisfactory explanation for its abrupt reversal. The official excuse emphasizing the danger of undetectable secret nuclear stocks could hardly be taken seriously. The real reason undoubtedly lay in Washington's reluctance to disarm in the face of domestic pressures and global ambitions. But this much was clear: another singular opportunity for disarmament had been sacrificed, and the responsibility this time rested squarely with the United States. The arms race had been given new life.

When John F. Kennedy assumed the Presidency in January 1961, circumstances were again propitious for a fresh start on disarmament. The Soviets had proposed programs for general and complete disarmament in 1959 and 1960, and according to historian Arthur Schlesinger, had "watched the arrival of the new Administration [in 1961] with marked interest." Premier Khrushchev, Schlesinger continues, sincerely desired an arms detente and, having

> given up on Eisenhower after the U-2 incident and the collapse of the Paris summit in May 1960, seized several opportunities to semaphore his hopes for Kennedy. His messages to Harriman and others after the election were followed by a Pugwash meeting [i.e. an unofficial exchange of views by American and Soviet experts] on disarmament in Moscow in December.

But the opportunity to reverse or at least stabilize the nuclear arms race at this junction was missed. It was missed primarily because President Kennedy, quixotic and inexperienced, sought to harmonize countervailing pressures for armament and disarmament. In short, he tried to achieve too much; he wanted to have his cake and eat it too.

This was precisely the trap which had impaled previous Administrations. The lure of negotiating settlements from strength, the pressures of a gargantuan military-industrial complex, the manipulations of an entrenched military bureaucracy, and the persistent assumptions at all levels in Washington about the communist menace and how to cope with it—these constituted a potent and growing combination of forces which, unless confronted and restrained, were bound to be the final determinants of policy. Kennedy's endeavors to compromise with these forces while advocating arms reduction had the effect of converting disarmament negotiations into charades, and guaranteed a prolongation of the arms race. Indeed, it was President Kennedy who, in the face of Khrushchev's overtures for disarmament, authorized a vast expansion of the nuclear arsenal.

President Kennedy's extensive missile build-up in the early 1960s is well worth reviewing. It not only provides insight into the dynamics of the present, ongoing arms race, but is extremely revealing of American perceptions and motivations about the Soviet Union. It also helps elucidate the reasons for many Soviet actions taken during those years.

The genesis of the Kennedy armament program can be found in the so-called missile gap (1957-61). Like the earlier bomber gap (1955-57), the missile gap was a fiction created by a combination of assumptions and forces within and outside the United States government. No such gap ever actually existed; it was merely believed to exist and Washington acted accordingly.

Officially anxiety over a missile gap began when the Soviet Union successfully tested an Intercontinental Bal-

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listic Missile (ICBM) in August 1957 and then orbited the first earth satellite in October. Confronted with this unexpected situation, officials in Washington jumped to the conclusion that Moscow would immediately proceed to mass-produce ICBM's, a contingency, which, in terms of supposedly reliable intelligence extrapolations, would give the Soviets roughly 1000-1500 missiles by sometime in 1961-62. The United States, meanwhile, had been planning for something less than 100 ICBM's by the end of 1961. This nightmarish comparison, coupled with the certainty that the Soviet Union was an enemy so cunning, so insidious and so antithetical to American principles as to be desirous of launching a surprise strike on the United States if the opportunity presented itself, led American officials to assume that any Soviet missile superiority would be employed either for blackmail or attack. In this light the decision was made to embark on a vast expansion program, sufficient to maintain or restore the full American advantage.

What is particularly instructive here is the intra-governmental process which led to the American determination to accelerate the arms race. To begin with, the various intelligence agencies had arrived at the figures of 1000-1500 Soviet missiles by estimating maximum Soviet capability. In other words, the tabulations actually defined a potential not a probability. Second, the policy-makers in Washington, guided to a large extent by their preconceptions about the Soviet Union and its ambitions, accepted the potentiality figures as a realistic projection. They therefore committed the nation to a developmental plan which would guarantee the United States a larger nuclear arsenal *in being* than the Soviet Union would be *capable of producing*.

Finally, the White House, in constant receipt of updated information of Soviet missile strength, was from the start caught in a matrix of conflicting and changing intelligence data submitted by the four official intelligence groups—the Central Intelligence Agency, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force. This meant that the President and his advisers had to rely ultimately on conjecture in deciding which competing set of figures, if any, were credible. Significantly, although all the incoming information was constantly being revised downward, some sort of gap was always presumed to exist.

Meanwhile military appropriations increased every year from 1956 through 1961, with the exceptions of 1960. The slight 1960 decrease can probably be explained by the desire of Republicans to create the impression of a favorable economic climate in an election-year, and the Defense Department's decision sometime in 1958 or 1959 to suspend mass production of first-generation missiles in order to wait for the more sophisticated, cheaper second-generation.

These, then, were the circumstances when President Kennedy took office in January 1961. However, by early February, due to the findings of the special Hitch Committee, commissioned by Kennedy to study United States defenses, it had become clear that no missile gap existed. On February 6, Secretary of Defense McNamara admitted to the press that there was "no missile gap." The following day The *New York Times* carried a front page article entitled: "Kennedy Defense Study Finds No Evidence of 'Missile Gap.' "

Despite interim denials of McNamara's statement by the government, the truth was out. In October 1961, Undersecretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric removed any lingering doubts by asserting that United States nuclear power exceeded the Soviet Union's to such an extent that a Soviet surprise attack could be sustained and then countered by an American "second-strike" as great or greater than the Soviet "first-strike." Alas, the missile gap had been nothing more than an illusion. The United States possessed unchallengeable superiority over the Soviet Union both in ICBM's and bombers.

The Kennedy Administration was therefore in an excellent position to call a halt to the arms race and move toward disarmament: no missile gap existed, Khrushchev had evinced his serious intent to halt the arms race, and strong intelligence evidence had accumulated that the USSR was constructing less than 4 percent of the ICBM's and only 20 percent of the heavy bombers estimated for the 1957-62 period. To put it another way, every available indicator suggested that Moscow was pursuing a policy of "minimum deterrence," not maximum capability. More explicitly, the Soviets were producing only those weapons believed necessary to forestall an attack on Soviet territory ("deterrence"); they were making no effort to construct a first-strike system which could be used for a surprise attack on the United States.

Yet Kennedy chose not to defuse the arms race. On the contrary, he decided to escalate it. Why? According to Arthur Schlesinger, the President actually did favor arms cutbacks but dared not challenge Congress on both bomber and missile reduction. The political and economic consequences were too hazardous, vested interests too pervasive. He therefore decided to compromise by opposing allocations for the development of a new bomber (B-70) while supporting increases for the missile program.

But I. F. Stone, who has done extensive research and writing on arms policy in the Kennedy years, disagrees with Schlesinger. Stone argues that Kennedy did not really want cutbacks because he had become convinced that by achieving massive superiority he would be better positioned to deal with the Soviets on expected diplomatic and military confrontations. Kennedy's first State of the Union message: "We are moving into a period of uncertain risks and great commitment in which both the military *and diplomatic* [Stone's italics] possibilities require a Free World force so powerful as to make any aggression clearly futile."

At any rate, the Kennedy Administration, dismissing

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the existent strategic advantages of the United States over the U.S.S.R. as inadequate, let pass another disarmament opportunity and began an enormous build-up of nuclear weapons. Although the Soviets in 1962 had fewer than 100 ICBM's (the United States had at least 100) and less than 300 long-range bombers capable of reaching American territory (the United States had 1800 long- and medium-range bombers which could reach Soviet territory), Kennedy announced plans in the same year to raise the American arsenal from less than 100 to 850 ICBM's. The following year this figure was increased to include 1000 minutemen ICBM's and over 650 submarine-launched Polaris missiles.

To the Soviet Union, such a vast missile program could mean just one thing: the United States was going for a potential first-strike force. Militarily, the strategy of the first-strike (the "counterforce" doctrine) is to obliterate the enemy's nuclear delivery systems (missiles, missile-carrying submarines, etc.) in order to make re-

taliation impossible. Diplomatically, possession of such a force in-being establishes a psychological and physical condition whereby an adversary might be threatened and coerced into concessions. The only sure way to counteract first-strike vulnerability is to improve and expand one's own nuclear establishment. In 1966 the compensatory Soviet build-up commenced. The actions of the Kennedy Administration had made this inevitable. Another and more dangerous phase of the arms race was under way.

Accession to the Presidency by Lyndon Johnson in 1963 changed nothing in basic American arms policy. The Kennedy philosophy was continued. Massive nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union remained an apothesis. The United States entered the Johnson period (1963-68) with roughly a 4 to 1 advantage in the number of deliverable warheads as well as a sizable lead in total delivery vehicles. By the end of the period that warhead ratio stood, despite the fact that both Washington and Moscow had substantially augmented their delivery during the interim.

Debate in the Johnson years flourished over the feasibility of such awesome strategic weapons as the advanced B-1 bomber (the old B-70), the Sentinel Anti-continental Ballistic Missile (ABM), the Multiple Re-Entry Vehicle (MRV). Ultimately all were approved and financed. The B-1 is scheduled to be operational by the mid-1970s; in November 1967 the decision to deploy a limited Sentinel ABM system was announced; somewhere between 1966 and 1968 Polaris submarines were equipped with MRV's; and in August 1968, the first MIRV was tested (deployment began in 1970).

The Johnson Administration, like its predecessors, adduced new Soviet threats to ensure endorsement of its military budget. The nation, for example, was told that American security was gravely imperiled by an alleged Soviet ABM complex around Leningrad known as the Tallinn Line. Once again the bogeyman theme of Soviet intentions produced the desired effect. By the time Secretary of State McNamara acknowledged officially in 1968 that the complex in question was an anti-bomber system, most of the requested funds for a United States ABM complex had been allocated.

Soviet defense-planning, naturally enough, had not remained dormant in the face of Washington's rapid nuclear expansion. As mentioned above, Moscow had launched a crash missile program starting in 1966. Over the next three years, the Soviets increased the size of their ICBM force from 250 to over 1000 (1969) giving them "parity," though only in ICBM's, with the United States. Apparently the Kremlin leaders had calculated that unless they embarked on an emergency catch-up, American overall superiority would soon become so great that the entire Soviet retaliatory force would be rendered obsolete and subject to first-strike annihilation. Such was the Johnson legacy to the arms race.

The election of Richard Nixon to the White House in 1968 virtually precluded any chance for fundamental revision of American defense attitudes. In his Presidential campaign, Nixon warned of a "security gap" despite the 4 to 1 American warhead advantage, ridiculed "parity" as defeatist, and promised: "I intend to restore our objective of clear-cut military superiority." A later pledge to base arms policy on "sufficiency" proved to be little more than a convenient euphemism for superiority.

Washington proceeded to fulfill Nixon's "superiority" pledge, though under the "sufficiency" label, by obtaining appropriations for the deployment and expansion of the Safeguard ABM (1969 and 1970); for the development and deployment of MIRV warheads (the Air Force announced June 19, 1970, that it had equipped 10 ICBM's with MIRV's); for the deployment of the "Poseidon," the Navy's subsurface-to-surface MIRV missile (the Poseidon became operational in 1970-71); and for additional work on the B-1 bomber. Intoned Defense Secretary Melvin Laird in March 1971 in the familiar cold war litany: "Our new strategy is positive and active. Past policy focused on containment and accommodation. The new strategy emphasizes measured,

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meaningful involvement and vigorous negotiation from a position of strength."

As usual, the "Red peril" was the justification for funds. In two key speeches before Senate committees on March 20 and 21, 1969, Defense Secretary Laird strategically released classified information on the Soviet SS-9 ICBM, depicting it as a doomsday, "multiple warheaded" weapon. "The Soviets are going for a first-strike capability," Laird claimed on March 21, "and there is no question about it. . . ." The SS-9 he continued, "can only be aimed at destroying our retaliatory force," and "if the Soviet threat turns out to be, as the evidence now indicates, an attempt to erode our deterrent capability," then the United States has "no alternative but to begin protecting its minuteman bases. . . ."

A year later, Laird announced that the U.S.S.R. was preparing for a possible sneak-attack on the United States and admonished that

> the Soviets are continuing the rapid deployment of major strategic offensive weapons systems at a rate that could by the mid-1970's, place us in a second-rate strategic position with regard to the future security of the Free World.

There is always the chance, of course, that Laird might be correct in his assessments, but the regularity of these false-alarms—and the "gaps" since World War II make it difficult not to treat such pronouncements with considerable skepticism.

The Present Agreement

The recently signed and much acclaimed Strategic Arms Agreement in Moscow, although important, did not by any means end the arms race. In the genre of the control-limitations agreements which were pursued seriously as a surrogate to disarmament beginning with the Test Ban Treaty in 1963—and including the Outer Space Treaty (1967); the Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968); the Sea-Bed Treaty (1971); and the Biological Warfare Treaty (1971)—the SALT accord simply altered the focus of weapons competition. Specifically, the arms race was shifted from one of weapons quantity and quality predominantly to quality.

Proposed by President Lyndon Johnson in January 1967 and accepted by Premier Kosygin in March, the bilateral Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitation Talks ("SALT") opened in Helsinki in November 1969. After thirty months and seven sessions of stringent, hectic bargaining in Helsinki/Vienna, an agreement was finally signed in Moscow on May 26, 1972. The text includes two parts: a treaty of unlimited duration restricting each country to two antiballistic missile sites; and a five-year freeze on offensive strategic weapons pending determination of a permanent accord.

The significance of this agreement should not be underestimated. It provides for the first limitation on strategic arms of the nuclear age, an important advance toward reversing the momentum of the arms race; it is a tacit admission by both Moscow and Washington that a sufficient strategic parity exists making adequate defense impossible in the face of nuclear attack; and it sets the stage for broader arrangements in the projected SALT #2.

But at the same time, the fact of the matter is that SALT involves no disarmament and does not preclude wide ranges of arms competition. No prohibitions, for example, are placed on conventional forces or military technology. Hence it is very probable that the arms will accelerate in such areas as weapons quality—from the size, accuracy and evasive skills of nuclear warheads (e.g. Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles) to the bizarre laser-beams. Even the text of SALT authorizes an arms race of this sort. Article IV of the five-year pact specifies:

> Subject to the provisions of this interim agreement, modernization and replacement of strategic offensive ballistic missiles and launchers covered by this interim agreement may be undertaken.

And, lest there be any doubt that the armament myth persists in Washington, one need merely note Presidential-adviser Henry Kissinger's observation that Americans had nothing to fear from the SALT agreement because not only will the United States retain qualitative advantages but also, at the end of five years, possess 3 instead of the present 2½ times as many rocket-carried warheads as the U.S.S.R.

In conclusion, it is imperative to understand that for the last two and a half decades the impetus and initiative for the arms race has come primarily from the United States. Herbert York, a prominent nuclear physicist and member of the General Advisory Committee of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, recently wrote:

> . . . I have examined many of the separate steps by which it [the arms race] has reached the incredible situation now facing us, and I have found in the majority of those cases that the rate and scale of the individual steps has . . . been determined by unilateral actions of the United States.

Statistics affirm that not once between 1945 and 1971 has the United States held less than a 2-1, and usually close to 4-1, advantage over the U.S.S.R. in total nuclear delivery vehicles. They also show that the United States has been steadily widening its lead over the Soviets in the category of deliverable, rocket-carried warheads ("force loadings"), a category which began to assume significance in 1966 with the introduction of MRV's Re-entry Vehicles) on U.S. missiles and became crucial in 1970 with the American deployment of MIRV's (Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles). In December 1970, for example, the United

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States had 4,000 such warheads to 1,800 for the U.S.S.R.—a difference of 2,200. The estimate as of June 1972 gives the United States an advantage of 5,700 to 2,500, a difference of 3,200. Herbert Scoville, Jr., Assistant Director for Science and Technology of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency from 1964-69, summarized the current (1972) situation as follows:

> All elements of our strategic forces are being improved far beyond the requirements of "sufficiency." We are deploying a new generation of missiles in both our land- and sea-based launchers when no current threat requires them.

Such continued efforts by the United States or any other great power to maintain strategic superiority can only, in the end, prevent the successful realization of substantive accords on arms reduction. If nothing else, the history of disarmament after the Second World War poignantly demonstrates that point.

ANGLOPHILIA

THE SCREEN

Art might be thought of as a way to represent reality —literally, to re-present it—so that it no longer embarrasses us. Art can make bearable, and at times beautiful, what is elsewhere shameful or inadmissible about our lives. A work of art accomplishes this by making us aware of itself, as art, at the same time that it is re-creating our awareness of these delicate matters in life. Since we remain conscious that it is an illusion we see, and not life, we can contemplate what would otherwise be shocking. Rodin's sculpture is a perfect example, partly because it is sculpture, which is the most aesthetic of arts, but more significantly because Rodin wants to exploit this power shared by all arts.

In Rodin's statues of lovers, the sensual is rendered sensuous. The pose may be unabashedly erotic, but the texture of the figures is that of cast bronze. The passion and physical energy apparent are as much Rodin's own as the lovers.' He purposely refuses to finish off and smooth to life-likeness the maquettes from which his molds are made. The sculptor's touch remains visible so that we are at each point soothed by the realization that it is art we see before us. Rodin's sculpture is also a good analogue for what François Truffaut is trying to achieve in his new film, a turn-of-the-century romance entitled *Two English Girls*, and this may explain why Rodin's statue of Balzac appears prominently in one of the film's scenes. (Balzac's novels would be another appropriate analogue.)

What kind of gamut Truffaut wants to run in this film can be gauged from two scenes, one near the beginning and the other about an equal distance from the end. In the first of these, one of the English girls, Muriel Brown (Stacy Tendeter), receives a letter from her fiancé Claude Roc (Jean-Pierre Leaud) who is in Paris. They had agreed to separate for a year to think it over before marrying; and now, as the camera picks up Muriel in a long shot reading the letter, she swoons. Thus we know that Claude has broken off the engagement. In the later scene, after many years have passed and Claude has had a protracted affair with Muriel's sister Anne (Kika Markham), Claude and Muriel are reunited, in bed. Now the camera moves into an extreme close-up of the bloodstain that Muriel has left upon the sheets. Thus we know Claude and Muriel have at last consummated their love.

In order to put together such diverse story elements as the swoon and the bloodstain—such extremes of romanticism and realism—Truffaut has done something comparable to what Rodin did. He has called attention to the artistic medium: he has tried to keep us mindful that this is a fiction, a work of art, we are watching. Truffaut establishes this attitude in his film at the very outset. Whenever he adapts a novel, as he has here, he begins by reading and rereading the novel itself, marking future "scenes" in his film with an elaborate system of marginalia. Under the credits for this film, Truffaut shows us the annotated pages from his copy of *Les Deux Anglaises et le Continent*. It is the hand of the artist, and that alone, of which we are first aware in this film. And throughout the film Truffaut continues to show his hand from time to time, by stylizing his cinematography as well as his storytelling.

When Claude first goes to visit his two English girls at their home in Wales, for instance, a transparency of his mother's face, reflecting his own thoughts, appears superimposed on the landscape outside the train window. Since it is his mother who will soon break up his romance with Muriel, there is an appropriate irony in the repetition of this optical much later in the film, when Claude sees Muriel's face floating over another landscape outside another train window. Besides using an occasional effect like this to make us conscious of his camera, Truffaut also uses his direction for the same purpose. One of the boundaries that the film crosses between an old-fashioned romance and a contemporary love story is in a scene where Claude visits Muriel's sister Anne in her Paris studio. On an impulse the heretofore decorous Claude suddenly plunges his hand into Anne's smock. No straight piece of acting could gloss over this twentieth-century breach of nineteenth-century sensibility, so Truffaut has Claude, his hand still inside Anne's bodice, glance around the room with anxious uncertainty. It is almost as if Claude were mugging for the camera, but his look converts to playable comedy a scene which would have made us squirm as melodrama.

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Like the optical effect, this glance askance of Claude's is also repeated later. Muriel has sent Claude a portion of her diary in which she confesses to an episode of lesbianism and masturbation earlier in her life; and as Claude finishes reading her words, he turns to the camera with a guilty look. Even the diary is a device calculated to remind us that it is only a re-creation, a recollection of experience rather than the experience itself, which we are witnessing. Muriel's diary is one of several such narrations that are part of Truffaut's narrative. Two others—one spoken by Truffaut himself and another originating in Claude's letters to his mother—are also voice-over contributions to the plot. But a fourth narration that figures in the film, a moot one of sorts, is perhaps the most significant. It is a novel that Claude ultimately writes and publishes about his twenty-year affair with his two English girls.

Claude's novel reverses the situation in his life: it is about two men in love with the same woman. This of course inserts yet another layer in the awareness of art that is here altering our perception of the story. The novel on which *Two English Girls* is based was written by Henri-Pierre Roche, whose only other work, *Jules and Jim*, was made into a film by Truffaut ten years ago. *Jules and Jim* also tells a story that reverses, like a photo negative, the plot of *Two English Girls*. In this way Truffaut reminds us that the experience recollected here was an artistic experience to begin with, his own.

When he made *Bed and Board* a few years ago, Truffaut finally brought to a conclusion the cycle of Antoine Doinel films that had begun with his first work, *The 400 Blows* from a new point of view more sympathetic to the adult than the child. *The English Girls* might be said to remake *Jules and Jim* with a comparable change of heart. In 1962 Truffaut's sympathies lay with the Jeanne Moreau character, who is the freest spirit in *Jules and Jim*. In *Two English Girls*, however, it is with Claude, the sanest, most stable corner of the triangle, that Truffaut's sympathies lie. It is a remarkable thing for a director to have begun his own career all over again with such brilliance and vitality as Truffaut has shown in these last two films. Unlike sculpture, film doesn't lend itself readily to the sort of stylization of gross reality that Truffaut has attempted in *Two English Girls*. It is a remarkable thing at any point in a director's career to have performed so difficult a feat of art so well.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

an exchange of views

'Exorcising the Exorcist'

Rochester, N.Y.

Perhaps I will be judged insufficiently objective to counter Raymond Schroth's somewhat arch dismissal of *The Exorcist* [*Commonweal*, Nov. 3, 1972]. I am, truth to be told, in the film version of the novel (Harper & Row, $6.95; Bantam, $1.25) and may therefore be construed as blindly defending the star I've hitched my rickety wagon to. However, both Bill Blatty and Ray Schroth are my friends and, since they are both—perhaps without realizing—on the same side, it's possible I might be a mediator. There are few enough Christians who take to the stump for what they believe, and it would be a shame if they wasted time hurling snide brickbats at one another when they could be off on the quest for listeners to the Good News.

Father Schroth's article seems to have three main objections to *The Exorcist*: first, that it deals in pre-Conciliar preoccupations and thought-patterns; second, that the events of the novel have nothing to do with the evils of today; third, that the novel does not offer a definite explanation for Karras' death.

Father Schroth asserts that Blatty deals with a church purportedly in the '70s but actually the church of the '40s which, he presumes, no longer exists. The actions and reactions of the novel's characters manifest a mind-set which is unaffected by Vatican II. This assertion, which I think is true of the characters, says less about Bill Blatty than it says of Father Schroth's apparent unfamiliarity with the mind-set of what may be a majority of today's Catholics. It is an error far greater than misjudging the novel. It is, sadly, a misjudgment of the audience that Blatty, the novelist, and Schroth, the priest, are both trying to reach. I think Blatty has read that audience better than Schroth has.

Surely, even at post-Conciliar Fordham there are, even now, a few priests who "still say Mass in Latin." I live in a community of only 20 Jesuits and at least three of the 18 say Mass in Latin—and every day at that. Surely, even in the circles Father Schroth frequents, there are still more than a few priests who swap "clerical banter at . . . cocktail parties." God forgive me, I do. Finally, I realize that I come from the boonies outside The Big Apple, which encompasses 99 per cent of the U.S., but I still "surprise otherwise sophisticated people when (I) wear informal clothes." Since the summer, I've been to L.A., N.Y. and D.C., and in each place film stars, interviewers and just ordinary old sophis-

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ticated folk express surprise—pleased surprise, I admit—when I turn up in turtleneck and sport coat. (Turtleneck? Okay. Tie? Well. . . .) Surely there are even a few becassocked Jesuits in Father Schroth's own recreation room who put their heads together and tut-tut at the garb of their younger brethren. "They're killing the Society *and* the Church!"

To nit-pick these details seems silly, but I do so to demonstrate that Father Schroth just may be guilty of three repertorial sins—if that word is still relevant: inadequate sampling of the feelings of the audience he serves, not keeping his ears open to opposing views, and thus, misjudging the receptivities of the audience he purports to know. The People of God are by no means identical to the college campus or theological circles or the City of New York. Obvious, but I wonder if Father Schroth realizes that.

The majority of Christians I have met do not read *Commonweal* or *The Critic*. At best they read the diocesan paper and perhaps the columns in *Time* or *Newsweek*. They do not have much connection with the activities of their parishes other than Sunday Mass —which they still don't call "the Liturgy." And they mourn—very privately—the death of any sense of mystery in the present homogenized language of the Mass. They don't want Latin back, really, but they do want some sense of a transcendent ceremony. I know a handful at best who have read even one of the documents of Vatican II, and fewer who could identify Cardinal Suenens or Dom Helder Camara or Hans Küng. I weep for the fact, but I don't ignore it.

I say all this not to gain points—much less to deride—but I think Father Schroth ought to know what the job is for the lovely-footed messenger who brings the Good News over the mountain to today's grassroots church. One can say true things without true things being heard. The language of the Vatican II-ers is as opaque to many Christians as the language of the catechism was. Perhaps Father Schroth has a greater realization of the susceptibilities of the faithful than his article demonstrates, but I don't see much evidence of it. So, if William Peter Blatty uses "cheap sensationalism" to hook such an audience into considering the possibility of some transcendent dimension to human life, he may have found a "way in." Father Schroth may deride it, but the fact is that Blatty *has* made people think of impalpable realities. This is no negligible achievement, even if it was reached by the cellar door. When all is said and done, I suspect more people have read *The Exorcist* this year than have ever read *Commonweal*. I weep for the fact, but I don't ignore it.

Father Schroth further suggests his aloofness from the majority of believers (and unbelievers) when he laments Blatty's failure to produce a work with the subtlety of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*. Perhaps Father Schroth does not watch television or go to the movies or skim the best-seller lists, but he can't possibly have failed to understand that any novelist or screenwriter today is writing for an audience far different from Henry James' or William Shakespeare's. When news commentators have to get on the air immediately after a Presidential speech and tell the people what it said, subtlety is not the avenue to any large audience.

Even further, he states that "the tales of Faust, Frankenstein, Dracula . . . draw our attention to larger themes —man's lust and pride and the power of evil (like Original Sin)." Why can *Dracula* draw a reader to a more profound consideration of evil and *The Exorcist* cannot? Is it because *Dracula* is hallowed by time and our boyhood nostalgia for Bela and the Boys? I don't know whether Bram Stoker had an apostolic purpose in writing *Dracula*, but even Father Schroth admits that Bill Blatty did.

Can anyone read *The Exorcist*, whether he believes in devils or not, without asking the question: if evil doesn't come from devils, where does it come from? If nothing else, *The Exorcist* did make Father Schroth ask the question!

I fear that Father Schroth may be cloaking himself in a Vatican II triumphalism as sterile as post-Tridentine triumphalism. Contrary to his suppositions, Vatican II has only touched the surface of the People of God. One cannot legislate a change in "presuppositions and thought-patterns." Alas.

Many people come to God, as Augustine did, through sin. As Merrin states in the novel, "Perhaps evil is the crucible of goodness. . . . And perhaps even Satan—Satan, in spite of himself —somehow serves to work out the will of God." Any door may serve. But one has to get people at least to consider the ultimate option before they can even apprehend the meaning of what Father Schroth rightly calls the core of Christianity: "the Lord and Father revealed to us in the self-emptying love of Jesus." One must have some suspicion of transcendent reality and theism before he can understand that Jesus purported to be something more than a social reformer.

On another tack, Father Schroth says that the prefaced allusions to Dachau, Communist torture and the Mafia "have no real connection with the rest of the novel." He then concludes by saying that *The Exorcist* reader "finishes as reassured as any good citizen of seventeenth century Salem that the ultimate source of evil is not the malice and selfishness of the human will but an Outside Agitator who comes in and takes over."

True, anyone who skimmed the novel as cursorily as Father Schroth must have, probably could be left with this impression. If so, he missed the three pages (Bantam, 368-370) in which Blatty, through Merrin, confronts the question of human vs. diabolic responsibility for evil:

> Yet I think the demon's target is not the possessed; it is us . . . every person in this house. And I think—I think the point is to make us despair; to reject our own humanity, Damien; to see ourselves as ultimately bestial; as ultimately vile and putrescent; without dignity; ugly; unworthy. And there lies the heart of it, perhaps: in

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unworthiness. For I think belief in God is . . . a matter . . . of accepting the possibility that God could love *us*. . . .

There is no need for a devil to run our wars or our prison camps or our organized crime. He (or "It") need only convince us that we don't have what we should have—and then *we'll* reach out and grab it, no matter what the cost. Perhaps Blatty does not directly connect the source of Evil in Regan to the evil in Munich or Chicago; he gives us credit or the ability to make connections for ourselves.

This was perhaps too subtle to be noticed; not as subtle as Henry James, but nonetheless not as blaringly obvious as the more bizarre elements of the novel. If Father Schroth missed it, the reason might be that he was looking for less in the novel than was actually there.

A final objection Father Schroth raises is that the novel does not offer a definite explanation of Karras' death. Does he crack under the strain? Is it a sacrificial suicide? Is it an echo of the Gadarene swine plunging over the cliff? And he fears that the movie will take the same ambivalent point of view.

Of course he is right. The novel poses an option, not an answer. As Socrates discovered, a question is more likely to provoke thought in the general public than a pronunciamento. Far better that the ordinary reader ask, "What do *you* think happened in the end?" than to have a definite statement by the author or film-maker which closes the question and precludes further probing.

As a result of *The Exorcist,* I'm constantly asked by students and their elders, "Do you really think there's a devil?" My answer is that I don't know. But I do believe most heartily in an objective, personalized, nonvisible Good. In fact, both Father Schroth and I have wagered not only our lives but our possible families on that belief. I don't *like* to believe there is a personalized Evil, but in accepting a personalized Love, I've opened the door to the possibility of a personalized Hatred. Nor can I slough off the Gospel passages which put into the mouth of Jesus references to such a Personage. I'd like very much to consider them mere primitive myths, but it is not that easy to do without pulling the plug on the rest of what Christ reputedly said. Moreover, I find it odd that Father Schroth dumps devils which do have some Scriptural men-

tion, yet still clings to terms like "Original sin" which doesn't. It seems like rather selective reading.

Just as his does, my hard-wrought sophistication convinces me that devils are mere superstition, but there is just enough contrary evidence that I am hesitant to risk Father Schroth's enviable certitude.

Where does superstition end and an honest sense of mystery begin? I fear we won't get the answer from people who use the word "pious" as cavalierly as Father Schroth does.

It is true that our more susceptible forebears saw dryads in every tree and a god in every waterfall. We ourselves were led to believe that Adam conversed with a snake and Moses saw a bush burning in the desert without being consumed. It is reported further than an itinerant Jewish rabbi turned water into wine and wine into his own blood.

They were more gullible souls then, and our generation is one which sees gullibility as the cardinal sin. To be taken in, to be suckered, is unforgivable. To stand open-mouthed before anything is to blow one's cool. To have faith without certain proof is naive. We live in a generation without awe.

The White House and the Vatican are subject to so much criticism that they can inspire no gut loyalty in a people for whom even a landing on the moon has become commonplace. Who even bothers to watch capsule recoveries any more? For the last two years even the carnage in the Vietnam news could stir only a few to say, "Oh, my God!" We have a tolerance, almost an immunity, to awe. When one has witnessed an atomic explosion, very little can capture the susceptibilities of the American public and make them feel humbled by power. Certainly not the power of an unseen God. Even for the Architect of the Universe, Hiroshima is a tough act to follow.

And yet, as Father Schroth says, in such a vacuum "people will turn to pseudo-religious substitutes—drugs, apparitions, violent ideologies." *The Exorcist,* for one thing, shows the results of such substitutes. And it was successful to a great extent precisely because the occult is one thing that can still catch a jaded audience and open them to awe. If one can *use* this very fascination with the bizarre to lure an apathetic audience to consider the very Reality for which it substitutes . . . bravo!

Even Father Schroth can't deny that this novel has drawn many readers at least to consider the possibility of a personal reality transcending our senses. If one can make an audience, jaded by immensity, do that, he deserves better treatment—and deeper study—than Ray Schroth gave Bill Blatty. WILLIAM J. O'MALLEY, S.J.

Reply

Father O'Malley is right on one point: other than the news, I watch very little television. Meanwhile he has made a deeply-felt defense of his own collaboration in the film, while still misunderstanding my article, the book and—I suspect—the real needs of the church. His letter, which covers a lot of ground, seems to stress two points: that I write from the point of view of a New York liberal university professor and am thus out of contact with the *real* people whom Father O'Malley meets on movie sets or while teaching high school in Rochester; that I underestimate his friend Bill Blatty's apostolic motive and the effectiveness of

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The Exorcist in bringing people to God.

This is no place to argue which of us lives in the larger world—although I make no apologies for my own which, in recent years, has included people of all kinds and classes and three happy years teaching at that same high school in Rochester. I don't know how we're ever going to determine how much Christian love has been increased by the novel. According to an article by Dan Morrissey in the *Georgetown Law Weekly* [Nov. 8] on the impact of *The Exorcist* and the film crew on location on the campus, "the film's heavy theme isn't sparking much discussion among the undergrads on the problem of evil or the question of free will." It quotes Georgetown senior Mike Blatty, the author's son, "There's really none of that around here now. Right now it's all Show Biz." According to the *Washington Post* [Nov. 6], Bill Blatty is peeved that the crew was not allowed to film a desecration scene in Holy Trinity Church, especially after the *other* Jesuits had given him so much cooperation. He was also worried about the fact that a 12-year-old girl in Washington had developed symptoms of "diabolical possession" after reading his book.

I'm afraid that the attempt to solicit priestly blessings for *The Exorcist* book and film reminds me too much of the early days of *Playboy* when Mr. Hefner sought priests and ministers to baptise his little cultural package into respectability by submitting articles and friendly letters. I think we all *should* take risks and put ourselves in potentially compromising situations with the hope that some good will result. That's why priests sometimes find it necessary to join sit-ins, write controversial articles, associate with notorious people, go to political conventions and run for office. So, I'm glad Bill O'Malley has a part in the film. But I wish he would ask harder questions about what it means. And if Father O'Malley thinks that to consider Satan in a mythological context is to "pull the plug" on the rest of the Gospels, he should stop teaching religion and literature and go back to studying Scripture.

Finally, I suggest that the sense of "awe" brought on by the sight of human suffering is a poor gimmick to inspire faith. Faith is increased, I believe, when we see Christians struggle for justice and show concern for one another. The experience of this love lifts our imaginations to consider transcendent reality. Blatty's "devil" in Regan did not increase the faith of any character in the novel. It killed two priests and got Regan's mother to believe in Satan, not in God. Nor has it increased Father O'Malley's already strong belief in God nor helped him make up his mind on whether there are devils. That's not religion. That's not awe. That's Show Biz.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.

BOOKS

The perils of being papa

Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years

MARGARET MEAD

Morrow, $8.95

Father Figure: An Uncensored Autobiography

BEVERLEY NICHOLS

Simon & Schuster, $6.95

ANNE FREMANTLE

The Oedipus plays, the sorry saga of the House of Atreus, the play of Hamlet, all concern themselves with the death of a father. Possibly the greatest novel ever written, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, is about patricide. Yet fatherhood is perhaps the most elusive of relationships; many are fathers without knowing it; many women don't know who is the father of their child, and still today, as in the time of Moses to be a Jew, the mother, not the father, must be Jewish.

Margaret Mead is one of the greatest women alive. A pioneer in her field, an immensely creative scientist, a gifted writer, the author of almost two dozen books on anthropology, a concerned human being, she is one of the most valuable of our citizens. Beverley Nichols is, beside her, a lightweight. Yet some of his 43 books have made their mark in England; he is a successful playwright, a musician, a creative gardener; and his *Cry Havoc* showed him to be politically aware. Both these autobiographies emphasize their parents' role: both writers had early hostility towards their fathers. Yet how different their male parents! Margaret Mead's was a perfectly adequate husband and father, a respected university professor, whose lapses were mostly from taste, though "there were occasionally very different women in his life" and "when he threatened to leave my mother" his own mother announced she would stay with her daughter-in-law and the children. Beverley Nichols' father was a pathological monster, an alcoholic who savagely ill-treated his wife and three sons, whose bouts of drinking are described in horrifying detail. Beverley tried three times to murder him—the third time succeeding in breaking his leg. (Questions were asked in the British House of Commons when *Father Figure* appeared in England, as to whether Mr. Nichols should not now be arrested and tried for attempted murder). Mar-

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garet Mead's father told her "It's a pity you aren't a boy, you'd have gone far" and her mother, when she reached puberty, called menstruation "the Curse" (as did mine, and does every woman I ever met). Yet Margaret Mead declares: "I was always glad that I was a girl. I cannot remember ever wanting to be a boy. It seems to me this was because of the way I was treated by my parents. I was a wanted child." Yet she had "always felt that my father demanded too much of my mother and took her away from us to satisfy his own immediate and capricious requests.".

What emerges from both these fascinating autobiographies is, above all, how much a matter of luck is a happy or miserable childhood—and how much that luck depends on the father-figure. Margaret Mead had two working parents, and a grandmother too who had used her mind and had a career in the public world. "So I had no doubt that, whatever career I might choose, I would have children, too." And be fulfilled. Whereas Beverley opens his book with the words: "The first time I remember my father, he was lying dead drunk on the dining-room floor . . . I was six." His eldest brother was trying to bind their father's wrist with a napkin—he had cut it on the decanter of port he had been holding when he fell; another brother, aged nine, had fetched Beverley out of bed. His book is almost unbearably grisly: every reader must wish he *had* slain the dragon that poisoned his mother's life and that of his two brothers and himself. But the really most ghastly thing of all is that from the moment that Beverley's mother died his father never drank again. He had drunk for 40 years. "He had literally *fed* on alcohol, denying himself almost any other form of nutriment for weeks on end." He was, as Beverley explains, a sadist. When his victim was removed by death, he "laid down his glass." He died eight years later, devotedly cared for by his son Paul. By then Beverley had escaped—more or less.

Margaret Mead, on the other hand, can have no complaints. The worst that ever seems to have happened to her is not to have been elected to a sorority at De Pauw! She has had three husbands, with each of whom she was (rather briefly) in love (she was engaged for the first time at 16); she had, after several miscarriages, a daughter, and now has a granddaughter. And she has discovered, for herself, and for all of us, a great deal about what makes people tick.

Field work, she explains, is "a very difficult thing to do: to do it well, one has to sweep one's mind clear of every presupposition, even those about other cultures in the same part of the world." This she did, in cultures as varied as Samoa and Bali, and she had two years of total felicity—conjugal, professional, artistic—in the latter place. She and her third husband had a house built for them in Bajoeng gede, a low culture Balinese village, and there: "we recorded not one birth feast, but twenty; fifteen occasions all carefully recorded, when the same little girls went into trance; six hundred small carved kitchen gods from one village to compare with five hundred from another village." The opportunities were "dazzling." Yet after two years they voluntarily left, because the "essence of anthropological work is comparison." So they went to Tambunan, a Iatmul village where they could contrast the way Balinese and Iatmul mothers "handled a whole range of behavior—the way . . . the Balinese mother borrowed another baby in order to send her own child into a frenzy of jealousy, in contrast to the way the Iatmul mother protected her child from jealousy."

Anyone who read Margaret Mead's *And Keep Your Powder Dry* will remember her brilliant anthropological look at these United States upon returning here after many years in the field. In this autobiography she is very funny about the penalities of cross-national marriage. "British-bred men expect to make the decisions that American-bred women expect to make—how the house is to be furnished, where to plant the roses, where to go on a holiday." She tried to hide from husband number two that she ever did housework: he "did not intend to help me with it but he felt it was a reproach to him that I had to do it at all."

She seems to have had her closest relationship of her life with her paternal grandmother, and to be more pleased at being a grandmother than even with her maternity. "Everyone needs to have access both to grandparents and grandchildren in order to be a full human being," she declares. The human unit of time can be defined as the space "between a grandfather's memory of his own childhood and a grandson's knowledge of those memories as he heard about them. We speak a great deal about a human scale; we need also a human unit in which to think about time."

Let us then praise our fathers who begot us: and dispraise them too, when necessary—for Beverley Nichols' book is as salutary, in its horrendous way, as is Margaret Mead's shout of affirmation for life. And beyond both their experiences, somewhere, we postulate still "*deus tam pater.*"

Fiction with a Parochial Purpose: Social Uses of American Catholic Literature, 1884-1900

PAUL R. MESSBARGER

Boston University Press, $8.25

MICHAEL D. TRUE

The decline and fall of American Catholicism, so evident in the general cultural collapse of the church (with a few obvious exceptions) in the past ten years, are fit subjects for extended speculation and careful study—the less polemical, the better. In cultural history of this kind, which will obviously engage a number of future writers, Paul Messbarger of the University of Notre Dame has provided an excellent model—a sympathetic, yet honest investigation into the origins of American Catholicism's disintegration as a positive, liberating force.

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literature that the American church chose to further its message during the last sixteen years of the nineteenth century, but also in the cultural phenomena he examines, namely, "the way a minority group accommodates itself to the greater society, how belief and behavior are conditioned by this relation, and how literature itself becomes a functional tool in the process of integration and assimilation."

Although the text is relatively brief (116 pages, plus a very useful bibliography and index), it is extremely suggestive of further thought and study —a fact that I recognize, rather than do justice to in this brief review. Stated briefly, the book contributes to a better understanding (1) of the paltriness of the Catholic subculture and of the more dominant American culture of the past century; (2) of what might be done to revive both Catholic and American culture; (3) of the positive accomplishments of the past, even those that led to a dead end.

Messbarger treats the "Catholic" novel as a matter of considerable significance, as a reflection not only of the conscious effort of the American Church and hierarchy to preach its message in a particular way, but also of the taste and temperament of American Catholics in their popular choices. Initially, as he shows, the novel itself was regarded as unfit reading for the religious person, in America as in England during the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, its appeal to readers soon won serious attention for the novel from literary critics, particularly in the writings of Orestes Brownson, the most influential Catholic critic of the mid-nineteenth century. The establishment of church-sponsored publishing houses, such as Dennis and James Sadlier in 1832, and the popularity of two English novels, John Henry Newman's *Callista* (1856) and Nicholas Wiseman's *Fabiola* (1854), increased the significance of the religious novel in America. By the time of the Civil War, Catholic publishers responded to the ready market of "fiction with a parochial purpose," and by 1890, the Catholic novel had become a commercial success, with the issuance of more than 1,300 titles.

In this, as in so many other publishing ventures, Isaac Hecker, founder of *Catholic World,* was one of the most influential people; but, contrary to his wishes, the Catholic publishing industry became a roadblock, rather than a gateway to "non-Catholic" America. Unfortunately, for many Catholic reviewers, "religious affiliation came to be the ensign of literary talents with an understandable stiffening and hardening of critical standards." And the Catholic novel, "a work by an American Catholic novelist who wrote for an American Catholic audience, employing specifically Catholic materials, from a Catholic point of view," soon came to be a pretty sad exercise in fictional sermonizing; just how sad, the author demonstrates in two central chapters that summarize and comment upon several primary specimens, including Maurice Francis Egan's *The Vocation of Edward Conway* (1896) and Frances Tiernan's *Far-Away Princess* (1900). The central problem was not so much that these initial efforts were inartistic, but that the formula they developed became rigid. "The myth that was shaped, puny and graceless as it was, to provide the means of cultural freedom for the Catholic of a new era, became the instrument of entrapment and constraint for his descendants." Fiction with a parochial purpose came to define itself in a narrow way, much as the church itself was to do later. All was to be propaganda, with little art, where narrowness and artistic dullness came to dominate. It signaled a decline from which the American Catholic church may never recover.

Although Messbarger, in discussing these nineteenth century novels, does not refer to later Catholic artifacts, he does give an interpretation, based upon the materials that he studies, that sounds extremely convincing. In his introductory remarks, for example, he comments briefly on three products of the cultural forces he described, namely Richard Daley, Edward Kennedy, and Eugene McCarthy—each from very different "Catholic" backgrounds, but each very much alike, each representative of an already disappearing subculture. "For what is becoming clearer with each day is that the Catholicism which has remained virtually unchanged—except for enormous growth in numbers and wealth—for seventy-five years, will not survive another generation."

My only disagreement with Messbarger's interpretation comes in the chapter entitled, "The Politics of Americanism," which struck me as considerably off key from the rest of the book. The tendency of this chapter, placed so importantly at the front of his book, is to impose an interpretation on the material that appeared not to grow out of the subject under investigation. The problem is not merely that the Catholic church tried to accommodate itself to its American soil (which was necessary and inevitable), but that it chose a particular aspect of the American tradition—the overly centralized and jingoist aspect—by which to define itself. In this sense, its structure came to define its meaning, whatever one might say about its statements, its published documents.

But this is a minor point, not half so important as the overall approach which, one hopes, may correct a tendency among historians of American Catholicism who concentrate on official statements rather than upon more primary cultural documents, on artifacts —"liturgy, forms of devotionalism, church art, architecture, and not least imaginative literature," as Professor Messbarger does. In this sensitive and carefully documented book, he examines a paradox in modern Catholicism by reference to its past, "when the church appeared first to have developed a direction, a moral authority, and a clear promise, and then to have lost that momentum—all within a single generation."

To anyone in touch with people, young or old, trying to make sense of that Catholic subculture, this judgment may seem rather final. Surely, there are remarkable exceptions to the rule—particularly among admirers and

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co-workers of two remarkable Catholic women, Dorothy Day and the late Flannery O'Connor, who may yet accomplish a religious and cultural revolution on their own. But the more visible church is male and insular and artistically bankrupt, resembling nothing so much as that wounded, imperial elephant, once described by George Orwell as "powerless to move and yet powerless to die."

The Avenue of the Americas

JAMES SCULLY

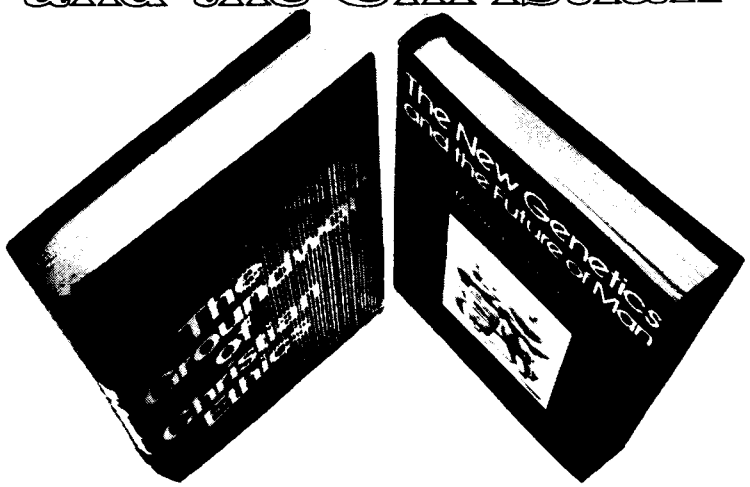
U. of Massachusetts Press, $6

ARTHUR A. COHEN

We have had our fill of poets with passions, whose hearts are where their heads should be, and pallid poets of meticulous intelligence who make poems like corpses from which the blood has been drained. It is rare to find among the younger poets—and it's fair to call James Scully, a poet of thirty-five, whose first book *The Marches* won the Lamont Poetry Prize in 1967, still young—someone who considers both the history of ideas as well as the morphology of his own passions. He is neither an intelligent poet nor a passionate one; he is, as one regards great poets of great age, a man of impassioned intelligence, of the prudent flame which burns but does not consume. He is clearly an extraordinary man whose given way of coping with reality is the poetic fury and reconstruction. I have little doubt as he goes along, if the passion isn't banked by the snows of that horrific coldness which is reality, that he may become a major (major would be enough for any man's lifetime, leaving greatness to memorials) poet.

The Avenue of the Americas is one of the most painful books of poems I have read, but curiously the pain is not exhibited as pain (Scully has no need to exhibit his wounds or at least when he does he draws back at the last, curling the wound into a grace), but as the way things really are. The structure of the book is complex but

ETHICS... GENETICS and the Christian



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—The Expository Times

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The New Genetics and the Future of Man

MICHAEL HAMILTON, Editor

Although the influence of the scientist on our lives is staggering, we are increasingly unable to influence him or, indeed, even to comprehend his work. This fascinating and sometimes frightening book reveals the grave risks of assigning to scientists, by default, decisions on cloning, test-tube babies and gene manipulation.

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not needlessly so, divided into five parts, each complete with curiously apt quotations from such epistemologists of the human condition as D'Arcy Thompson, Teilhard de Chardin, Charles Darwin. The intent of the epigraphs is not to set up a counterpoint to the poems, for each epigraph, as each section of the book, accumulates complexity, proceeding from single strands and single selves to the fate of the human species.

And yet the book avoids being programmatic or political. The reason why they work, these angry and loving poems, is that they know that the object of poetry is never an unembodied abstraction, but always a self speaking to other enfleshed or ensouled selves. Virtually every poem has an addressee—an other, beyond the rim of Scully's own self, living and dead friends, living and dead loves, living and dead children. These poems—many of them open letters to such friends—often seem about to break into rhetoric and then the tough hand slaps them down and I wince from the pain. Scully hasn't let me off or himself. But then there is nothing wrong with rhetoric, as Aristotle knew, because rhetoric enables thinkers and poets to make public truths men generally cannot bear to hear. Rhetoric is a species of lie only if one is disengaged from battling for truth—finally, rhetoric is only the sugar that helps us swallow the real medicine.

I might have asked Scully for more sugar, but I don't think he would honor or even understand the request, given the realities with which he deals, the most notable being the suicide of a beloved friend, the poet and playwright, Grandin Conover (1937-1969). The poems of this section are antiphons, conclusions to unfinished conversations. Conover believed poetry saved life and took his own and Scully, without that conviction, survives to write his epitaph in "Memoranda for a Letter of Resignation" and "Dead Letter."

Surely one of the most remarkable sections of this remarkable book is Scully's versions of seven poems by the young Russian poet Joseph Brodsky (born 1940) whose work, circulated only in *samizdat*, is regarded by such as Akhmatova to be the most promising to appear in Russia in fifty years. Working with a literal trot Scully has communicated Brodsky's majestic simplicity, as in this closing stanza of "The Monument":

Out from the pedestal's foot—
so help me—
every morning flowers will spring,
flowering.
We shall raise a monument,
a thorn in nobody's side.
Even cabbies
will wonder at its gilt-edged silhouette.
Among the shrubbery
lovers will arrange their rendezvous.
Let's set up a monument
and hurry past it on our way to work.
All around it
tourists will snap snapshots of one another.
At night, spotlights will light it up from below.
Let's set up a monument to a lie.

The Brodsky poems fit well the intention of this collection. Scully is up there at some university in Connecticut quite capable of organizing a neat and orderly life, but that doesn't appear to be his option. Quite the contrary. He writes a poetry which has nothing calm and consolatory about it, nothing at ease in his New England Zion. The natural Eden of unspoiled hills and fields does not return into a hell of contrivances and depredations. There is nothing trivial in Scully's imagination nor does he come apart like many young poets, who fall victim unknowingly to the *petitio principi*, the lesser being, asked not only to symbolize but to stand in for the greatest. The epigraphs—notably Teilhard— remind the reader that this poet is playing for the highest stakes, but unlike his poetic ancestors—I think of Hopkins and Yeats—he must make up his myths as he goes along, occasionally tapping fluid from the archetypal myths of our common past, rich as it is in living, dying, and reborn divinities.

David, where then is our pleasure,
our peace . . . that lost
garden whose crowning
Justice dropped omens of death,
bright leaves and overripe morals.
What then? Who'd
dare trust the ideal
rage we would live—as a boy
loves his wet dreams; the old heavens found, desolate and wild.
The fitful
horror come home for good.

REVIEWERS

ANNE FREMANTLE is the author of *The Three-Cornered Heart* (Viking).

MICHAEL D. TRUE teaches English at Assumption College in Worcester, Mass.

ARTHUR A. COHEN's new novel, *The Messiah Is Uptown*, will be published by Random House next spring.

IN BRIEF

TRAVELS IN NIHILON *by Alan Sillitoe, Scribners, $6.95.* The fine talent of the man who wrote *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* is scarcely visible in his new book, a story of four men and a woman who travel about Nihilon gathering data for a guidebook to that fictional but all-too-recognizable land. Nihilon is dedicated to nihilism, which, in practice, becomes a collective surrender to the worst impulses of modern society. Thus, President Nil's government prohibits sober driving, imprisons enemies of corruption, peddles pornography among the citizenry to raise money, and so on. Get it? This sort of anti-utopian putatively satirical novel is easy to write and difficult to write well; the very familiarity of its materials seems to encourage heavyhandedness. Sillitoe's incidental inventiveness in *Travels to Nihilon* is not impressive, and although genuine wit might redeem all, I didn't find the book funny (which it tries hard to be). MARK TAYLOR

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Michael Novak (Cont.)

other Americans? Unless it is as projection?

This projection of the racial fears of the educated Left upon middle America is deeply resented. Ordinary citizens do *not* believe in the moral superiority of Mary McGrory, Robert Silvers, Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Tom Wicker, Dan Rather, Shirley MacLaine, or any of the others who speak from that concentration in "the Northeast" both of the media and of liberal-radical attitudes. One constant all around America is a deep contempt for the contempt in which people feel themselves held by the educated elite of the Left. They *hate* the symbolic alliance they perceive between prestige universities, the New York-Washington media and tangible disdain for middle America—disdain for themselves.

George McGovern for two years identified himself with all the symbols which generate strong counter-reactions in a majority of Democrats (to speak only of them). He didn't seem to have the insight to realize what he was doing, to compensate for it—or even to do it well. He made more major bloopers in one campaign than a major politician is allowed in a lifetime. He could control neither his staff nor events nor his own image.

While Muskie and Humphrey split the center, McGovern won a number of low-margin victories in primary states, then with Humphrey out of money limped through California (Humphrey beat him in the one TV market he had money for), and took an unexcited New York unopposed. The exclusion of urban ethnics from the convention—with no apparent compensation or consolation, but with gloating and dancing on the grave—sealed his fate. What he was in the polls in June he remained. The excluded ones said, in effect, "Go ahead. Win without us."

His delay over Eagleton, his complete misperception of the symbolic offices of the President—whose gestures acquire a public, liturgical character, and are not merely those of an "open, decent" private citizen—only confirmed what people already believed. He was incompetent. (I worked for him as the lesser of two evils; I hoped he would "grow with the job." And many of his positions were more sensible than he made them seem. Even Nixon will adopt them.)

Almost everywhere, one encountered a *passionate* hostility against the man—not least among loyal Democrats who did not want to vote for Nixon. A streak of weakness in the man—they spoke of this under the rubric "inconsistency." They didn't mean the "inconsistency" of a man who boldly changes positions but the "inconsistency" of a man who worries more about the tidiness of his own decency than about the huge power plays and high interests politics concerns. A man you could not trust to change U.S. Steel, or General Motors, or perhaps even his own staff. How dare a man speak of change, and show no signs of understanding where power is or how to wield it?

George McGovern was never very important to "the movement" except as a figurehead. He commanded no such loyalty as Eugene McCarthy had, or Bobby Kennedy. A movement has to have a leader. No one expected wisdom from him, or leadership, only decency. He had a kind of moral lambency one wanted to protect, help—even propel forward. One forgave him a certain moral complacence. It is so typical of the Left.

So Protestant, too: One felt it would be trespassing on his religious privacy to challenge it—especially just then, near the end, when the columnists of the Left were urging him to mount his white horse again, and he did.

But millions loathed McGovern, and not because he was too radical. What, after all, was radical in his proposals? Incompetent, unwise, prematurely stated, stated in ways that generated fears rather than in ways that liberated fresh energies—but not "too advanced." In many states, even in the primaries, the actual difference between the posi-

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tions of McGovern, Muskie and Humphrey (and add Ted Kennedy, too) was scarcely a single angel dancing on a pin. Differences were almost wholly symbolic—who was associated with whom, through what memories or deeds or struggles or future prospects.

A President could grant amnesty today to conscientious objectors who evaded the draft and win great acclaim; could quietly move to change laws and attitudes concerning marijuana; could quietly work to create alternatives in the states where abortion reform is an issue, so that both sides would feel understood and assisted; could slowly lead Congress to shift funds from military waste to economic conversion; could join Wilbur Mills in pressing step by step for effective tax reform—and so on. But you don't do all this—against Nixon—by pumping yourself up as a great stuffed target. Politics is 90 percent the art of knowing *how*. The art of doing, not preaching.

Just after the election, however, McGovern most clearly revealed his contempt for the portion of the electorate that rejected him. Nothing explains better why these voters disliked him than *his* attitude toward them. He told *Life* he considered them racists: "Anyway, I really do not feel humiliated. I think that Nixon's four-year strategy to wed the Wallace vote to his vote worked. He saw in 1968 that if he could put together a coalition of Republicans plus defecting Democrats—Wallaceites—he could build a strong majority. I think that's why he launched his Administration with the so-called southern strategy, and why it was extended nationwide. He really tapped the seeds of racism, the fear of change, the fear of the young, of the black. I came to represent all those things. . . . You have to remember that at various times in history *the forces of irrationalism and fear* have temporarily triumphed." (Emphasis added). Thirty-five million registered Democrats, in short, are irrational, racist, fear-ridden, and *that's* why they rejected McGovern!

Nor was this an isolated interview. He told the *New York Times* (Nov. 14): "I couldn't make the kind of compromises on issues that would have won the Wallace support." But Bobby Kennedy stole Wallace's vote in 1968. Without making compromises. "And that being the case, I suppose that when he started either winning primaries or coming in a strong second, it should have been clear to us that no Democratic nominee would win, unless Wallace went independent and held those votes away from Nixon, or unless it were the kind of a Democrat who could have pre-empted the Wallace vote," which was, exactly, part of the challenge. ". . . I suppose the busing issue was the code word, and the attacks on welfare recipients." Not code words, real grievances. ". . . Those Wallace people were laying back there quietly, they weren't coming to our rallies." Were your rallies symbolically exclusive? ". . . I'm not sure how you can accommodate within one party the kind of forces that would win the approval of John Connally and the people that were supporting me, whether they really belong in the same party." Give Connally the South, what about Democrats in the big cities of the North?

Liberal Democrats have run with exceptional strength in 1970 and 1972. Why? Because our people *want* progressive leadership—progressive leadership that *includes* them.

One out of every three Wallace votes went to McGovern. The Wallace vote doesn't account for the magnitude of the defeat, not by a long shot. Wallace does not account for the 60 million voters who did not vote at all. You can't hide behind Wallace.

What McGovern takes as "code words" are often code words of the Left. In order to object to present government policies aimed at helping blacks, one doesn't have to be led by "forces of irrationalism and fear." There are many FHA scandals in lower-income housing for whites and blacks; too few jobs to go around; lousy enough schools in both white workers' and black workers' neighborhoods; and the corrupting welfare system is despised as much by blacks as by whites. Busing is not an infallibly effective tool, but a hotly disputed tool. Crime is a problem of utter seriousness: it is ridiculous to have to be thinking of personal safety all the time, in a supposedly free country.

These are real-life, concrete problems, about which McGovern did not speak with conviction, clarity, or connection. Liberals afraid to soil their hands with real problems deserve to be rejected as Presidential candidates.

Governor Wallace did well in many primaries because the Left has lost credibility. Despite severe regional and ethnic handicaps, despite a well-known anti-labor record, Wallace manages to touch the sense of grievance and pain so widespread among working-class Americans. No sympathetic person putting himself in the place of workers can fail to understand that there are plenty of real reasons for grievance. But Wallace is a "protest" candidate; in the final election, when it counts, people desert him in droves.

Racial conflict is one source of grievance. But the *handling* of racial conflict by the Left is the major divisive factor. Justice no longer *appears* to be even-handed—it seems outrageously one-sided, in favor of blacks. Scholarships to colleges, hiring practices, attention in the media, the seating at the Democratic National Convention—whites of lower status, talent and security *feel* unequally treated. In such matters, a wise politics would suggest the importance of altering the appearances.

The Left seems more preoccupied

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with the moral pleasure of helping blacks and Chicanos, to the *exclusion* of others, and with interpreting every grievance of working class whites as a code word for racism, than in making racial justice work. Ideology has replaced pragmatism. The day Jack and Bobby Kennedy made civil rights a "moral issue" they set back the clock of steady advance by 50 years. He did for domestic politics what Graham Greene's "Quiet American" did for Vietnam. Moral passion blinded practical, modest vision.

Not even Teddy Kennedy now has real political credibility in urban ethnic neighborhoods which once were his brothers' strength. Both Eunice Shriver and Sargent Shriver, separately, had grim experiences of real rejection, especially in Slavic neighborhoods. Why? Because the Kennedys are now perceived as one-sided—as having become moralists, preachers, no longer practical politicians concerned equally about everybody.

White leaders on the Left come into black and Chicano neighborhoods to be exhilarated, like white colonists of the past. This time they dangle not "civilization" but "liberation"—promise of coalition between the black, the poor, the young, and "women." Excitement, adulation, charisma. In Slavic and Italian neighborhoods it is different—more tense. One cannot play "Lord of the manor." The former peasants are cynical. They study every gesture with a certain impassivity. They have been cheated often in the last thousand years. The white leader of the Left senses the chill, prefers the excited applause of yet another black rally.

"What is the question?" Gertrude Stein asked. The question is whether some leader of the educated Left can make contact once again with the only constituency that can supply the central ranks of a successful progressive politics: the urban, ethnic working family. Anthony Lewis, Mary McGrory, and a host of others, including George McGovern, are so far out of touch with the ordinary voter that one despairs of such leadership arising on the educated Left, either among publicists or among politicians.

Perhaps there is nothing to do but organize a new party, around new leadership, on a more centrist base, and let the educated Left hold its pose of lonely moral superiority.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 243)

is needed is a context for integrating value systems in our society so that there can be a genuine expression of collective moral outrage at *every* injustice and not just a selective few. The fact that there was a huge public outcry at the terrorist murder of several Israeli athletes in Munich while there was negligible notice given to the destruction of an Arab village by Israeli retaliatory bombing speaks to this lack of genuine collective moral outrage, viz., why was there some in one instance and not in the other?

In the Vietnam war an entire people together with its land and cultural heritage is systematically being wiped off the face of the earth because we do not know how to express our moral outrage collectively. Acceptability of death by aerial bombing may be due to the fact that one does not see the victims die, let alone suffer. It could well be that the experience of suffering is missing from America's collective consciousness as it was not during the Depression and World War II, and that is why it is difficult to raise our consciousness to the level of outrage.

Representatives and spokespeople of the traditions upon which this nation was founded have an incumbent responsibility to band together into groups, and, through their many and varied life styles, *collectively* express moral outrage. *Time*'s essay remarks—"Indignation tends to vanish when a people no longer finds itself capable of surprise." The role of concerned individuals would be to provide that element of surprise and fan the flame of indignation that may well have to be sparked by an experience of suffering.

Sociologists and anthropologists of the future will have a serious problem studying this segment of our civilization when they compare our professed beliefs as embodied in our traditions (religious and civil) to our mode of collective behavior and find no correlation. No doubt some 21st century redactor of our national tradition may find need to relabel the "American Dream" of late '60s and early '70s as the "American Nightmare." I'd like to think I'm wrong. C. GILBERT ROMERO

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